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MISCELLANIES

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

BY

GUSTAVUS GALE.

ME VERO PRIMUM DULCES ANTE OMNIA MUSÆ.——VIRGIL.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND SOLD BY G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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DEDICATION.

TO

SIR MICHAEL LE FLEMING, BART. M. P. &c.

SIR,

I dedicate the following Sheets to you, from a Sense of Gratitude and Respect. From Gratitude for that Friendship and Kindness, which you have uniformly shewn me, under the most distressing Circumstances, and from Respect for those many amiable Virtues, which adorn your Character.

I remain, Sir,
Under a Sense of many Obligations,
Your most grateful and devoted Servant,

GUSTAVUS GALE.

Carlisle, March, 10, 1794.

PREFACE.

THAT the following sheets now offered to the public eye, are replete with inaccuracies I am ready to allow; that they are wholly destitute of merit, I am equally unwilling to suppose. The former deficiency will rank them with the generality of those publications, with which the present age teems; the latter supposition may possibly bring upon their author, a charge of self-sufficiency and confidence misplaced. It is, however, not in the power either of the one or the other, to deter me from my present purpose. I was not induced to undertake it from vanity, nor shall I relinquish it from a dread of any animadversions which it may meet with. Of this I am well assured, it is not in the power of a mind fraught with much greater stores of knowledge than mine, and possessed of greater natural abilities, to write much that is new, particularly in poetry. The writings of the present age are, I apprehend,

hend, most of them copies of those of the past. Their features may be different, but the form is the same. Without perceiving it, we imbibe the sentiments of other writers, when we read their compositions; and unconscious of the theft deliver to the world, as productions of our own pen, what have probably made their appearance some hundred years before. A small share of indulgence I humbly intreat from every reader.—To many, who may honor these sheets with a perusal, the situation and history of the author is well known. To their humanity he appeals. Nor am I willing to suppose, that there [illegible]y within that circle of readers, into which this volume will be admitted, who will not have good nature enough for the author to wish to be pleased with his writings; and where that is the case the severity of criticism will in a great measure vanish. It is seldom exerted with rigor, but amidst that description of men, who either imagine it to be a duty incumbent upon them, or consider it as a pleasing amusement, to hinder the reception of every work, previous to the public

discussion of its merits; who stand as centinels in the avenues of fame, and exult at the idea of giving ignorance or envy the first notice of a prey. From such characters, as I have little reason to expect encouragement, so am I little desirous of courting their favor. The liberal minded reader I have been anxious to please; but far be it from my mind to court applause where there is predetermined prejudice against me. I have now only to add my most grateful and respectful acknowledgments, to those numerous friends, who have so handsomely patronised my performance, and to express a wish that my book may give such satisfaction as may entitle me to their notice on a future occasion. Unforeseen and unavoidable accidents prevented the appearance of these sheets at the time proposed; the author therefore humbly intreats forgiveness for the temporary delay, which these have occasioned.

Carlisle, March 10, 1794.

ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

EDUCATION. I.

IT is painful to reflect upon the disproportionate degree of knowledge arrived at by men of the present age, compared with that attained to by our ancestors, especially when we consider the superior advantages which we now enjoy. The avenues to science were never more easy of access than they are at present. The teachers in every department of it never better informed; yet, strange as it may appear, the proficients in literature were perhaps never fewer. The solution of this difficulty is certainly neither easy nor pleasant; it is however an interesting consideration, and ſhall be the object of our present attention. And here I am compelled to censure that fool-

ish pride, which actuates some parents to have their son, who is probably destined for one of the superior departments in trade, trained up to a knowledge of the Latin tongue; however deficient his genius, or however insignificant that stock of classical knowledge must be allowed to be, which is acquired in the space of a year or two, and that at the expence of much more useful knowledge, and of time which might be so much better employed. Equally reprehensible is the foolish pedantry of some teachers, who think the mystery of all science is comprehended in the leaves of a Lexicon, and that an acquaintance with the writings of a Tully at once forms the complete scholar. Such ideas are but too prevalent, and with the uninformed mind carry too much weight. Our reverence, and our gratitude is certainly due in the highest sense, to the learned and valuable writers of ancient Greece and Rome. The Sages of Antiquity wrote with correctness and with vigour. Their style in every species of composition is above praise, excites our wonder and claims our respect, and having the advantage of the book of Nature, first laid open to their view, the efforts of their genius came recommended by the additional charm of novelty. Man however

ever is in his improvement a progressive animal. If the ancients first laid the foundation of knowledge, we have built a wonderful superstructure upon their labors. First then, I would seriously recommend an intimate and an entire acquaintance with the classics, as the foundation of the knowledge of a gentleman; whether by that epithet is meant the man of independent fortune, or the man who is engaged in the labors of a profession. I say, intimate and entire, for how many do we hear speak in raptures of the eloquence of Demosthenes, when perhaps their utmoſt knowledge of his writings has been communicated to them by Mounteney, and talk of the beauties of the Iliad from the four first books, which they have read at school.

The arranging of my system for teaching the classics, ſhall be the subject of a subsequent paper, as likewise those pursuits, which according to my ideas form an essential part of every classical and liberal education. I ſhall only at present observe, that I consider mathematicks, as a science which ought to meet with encouragement in every school, and to be enforced on the minds of every pupil, let his future destination in life be what it will. It may not perhaps particularly concern him, to

know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, but it will most essentially benefit him, to acquire and fix a habit of reasoning and of thinking closely; for who does not see the usefulness of the military exercise to a soldier, though all its manœuvres be not practised in war?

EDUCATION. II.

ALTHOUGH from my age and inexperience I feel myself incompetent, to point out any system of education for youth intended for the University, which ſhall not be subject to much censure, and to many animadversions; yet from my professional situation as a schoolmaster, it will in some measure be thought a duty incumbent upon me, to present the world with my opinion. In the first place then, it appears to me, that whatever prevents the necessity of labor and exertion must eventually impede, instead of accelerating, the acquirement of knowledge. I do not in this allude merely to the practice of allowing English or Latin translations to the different classical authors read at school, but to the more common one of indulging the ſtudent with a Clavis to a particular author, and a Gradus to assist him in the composition of Latin verse. If books of this nature are not allowed, additional trouble will no doubt be occasioned to the instructor, but for that trouble he will be amply rewarded by the slow but lasting, the unobserved but valuable attainments, which this exertion of memory and spirit, will procure for his pupil. I

no more than Mr. Clarke suppose that there is any particular magic inherent in the leaves of a dictionary, though I am convinced that there is a charm, and a durable one too, in whatever is acquired by the pure efforts of labor and fatigue. The custom of composing Latin verse, as received in our schools of eminence is certainly a laudable one. I should press it as the best mode of gaining an intimate knowledge of the classics, reserving it at the same time for those and those only, who are bred to one of the professions, or who are born to affluence. As to the *Naſcitur Poeta*, no doubt the affirmation is true in general; but I will venture to say it is often applied to as the refuge of indolence: and let it be remembered that genius untried is unknown. Against the composition of Latin prose no reason whatever can be assigned, with respect to youth in the abovementioned situations. A theme is certainly a most excellent task, as it at once exercises the imagination, improves the memory, and ripens the judgment, not to mention its use in the acquiring and fixing of a good style. The choice of authors for the scholar, as well as the course in which they are read, is very different with different masters, and it is with great diffidence that I feel myself

self obliged to say something on this head. Were I to divide my school, into six classes, I think I would thus arrange my instructions. The lowest class should be occupied wholly and entirely with grammar. The grammar I would recommend is Ward's Edition of Lily. 2nd Cordery, Cornelius Nepos, Phædrus and Grammar. 3rd Grammar, Ovid's Epistles and Metamorphoses, Cæsar's Commentaries. 4th Greek Grammar, Testament and Lucian, Virgil, Cicero's Orations, and Sallust. 5th Homer, Xenophon, Virgil and Livy. 6th Demosthenes, Sophocles and Euripides, Tacitus, Horace and Juvenal. These read with care and attention, and at the same time accompanied by other select authors, which might be perused in private, would, in my opinion, lay a tolerable foundation of classical knowledge. But the knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics, however valuable, is not alone sufficient. Let the 4th and 5th class, at their leisure hours be employed in reading our most admired English writers. Let their minds be expanded, by being admitted to a survey of the sublime flights of a Milton, the genius of a Shakespeare, the elegant simplicity of an Addison, and by the strength of thought and style displayed in the writings of a Johnson.

FRUGALITY.

PRIVATE œconomy may be deemed one of the most useful duties incumbent upon us during our residence here. If not a virtue itself, it is the parent of many virtues, and justly demands our most serious attention from the variety of blessings we derive from an habitual practice of it. The science of sparing is interesting to all, from the elevated possessor of a princely revenue, to him, whom Providence has ordained to toil at the plough, and by corporeal fatigue to procure a daily sustenance for his family; for as the expences of all men, generally speaking, are fully equal to the income they possess, and as the more a man has, the greater claim his indigent fellow creatures have upon him for relief; it ought to follow, that the same degree of exactness is necessary to the rich man, in balancing and correcting his accounts, and in methodizing his expences, as to the humble possessor of what his daily labor procures him. The reflecting mind beholds with surprize, that a duty, productive of so many advantages, should be in general so grossly neglected,

or at best but partially practised, as it is. Numerous are the instances of men, reduced to indigence and dependence from the neglect of an early attention to œconomy: daily are these observed, but small is the general advantage which is thence derived. Men of this character are censured by many, pitied by some, and neglected by all. I know not of any more beneficial scheme, for the well regulating of our expences, and properly proportioning them to the income which we possess, than that of keeping a most minute and correct written account of each particular expence which occurs. The frequent review of our extravagance, which this will give occasion to, forcibly arrests the mind, and will turn it to prudence and reflection. With unpleasing sensations we read of the transgressions of others, but the mind will be doubly shocked by this written catalogue of its own. I do not however wish to consider frugality merely as an useful mercantile habit, instrumental towards the acquisition and preservation of wealth, but to take it in a more enlarged sense, as that habit which forms the mind to the practice of every virtue, and which fits it for the reception of every thing just and honorable. It is well observed by the admired author of

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the Rambler " that not only they who pursue any lucrative employment, will save time when they forbear expence, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit, but that they who are above such minute considerations, will find by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations, by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly."

An attention to frugality, when considered in this light, rises in our esteem, and claims our highest regard. The practice of it as a duty, incumbent upon all who wish to pass through life comfortably, and unannoyed with the sneer of upstart self-importance, or the low exultation of little minds on the visible effects, which a neglect of it has produced, might of themselves sufficiently indicate its importance: but when we consider it as the ground-work, on which may be raised, a noble superstructure of virtue; when we consider that the practice of every thing praiseworthy, chiefly depends upon our denying ourselves the gratification, of our unruly wills and appetites; and that this denial is in a great measure promoted and produced by a minute attention to this valu-

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able habit, we are obliged to rank it very high in the list of moral obligations. Whatever stimulates the soul to virtue, and directly or indirectly inclines us to the practice of those duties enjoined us in our present station, it is as much our duty to cultivate, as any law dictated to us by the inspired penmen, or any precept contained in the writings of the Evangelists.

A COM-

A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE WRITINGS OF ADDISON AND JOHNSON.

IN reviewing the writings of these two great teachers of morality, the mind balances betwixt opposite excellence, nor will it be an easy matter to turn the scale in favour of the one, without deducting from the merits of the other. The object which they had in view, was equally honorable and praiseworthy, and the good effects produced from the wise lessons, they have left us, are felt and acknowledged by all, who can receive improvement from the beauties of truth presented to their view, or who can be charmed by the elegance of language. The style of Addison is natural and unaffected, easy and polite, equally adapted to subjects the most serious and important, and to those the most trifling. That of Johnson is nervous and comprehensive. Addison is full of those graces which a rich imagination diffuses over writing, and the admirable vein of humor which abounds in him, will ever render him a standard author with the British nation. Johnson forces us to assent to the proposition he advances, by the expressive

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and dignified manner in which he represents it to our view. Possessing great powers of mind, he conceives his object strongly, and expresses it firmly and clearly. The mind is fortified against doubt, and willingly assents to whatever he advances. Every phrase and every figure which he uses, tends to render his subject more lively and complete. The one charms us into compliance by his polite and elegant address, the other forces conviction by the commanding ascendancy, which his language obtains over the mind. In the writings of Addison, we view the highly polished and courtly style of Pliny, with the elegance and fancy of Virgil; in those of Johnson the nervous strength of style and though displayed in Livy, in the Orations of Demosthenes, and in the Annals of Tacitus. Each have their separate beauties and faults. In reading the pages of the Rambler, we are often obliged to regret that there is a visible stiffness in the arrangement of the sentences, untempered with that graceful ease which is the grand characteristic of all Addison's compositions. At the same time we are forced to acknowledge, that the performances of the latter are not always perfectly correct. The free and flowing manner of this amiable writer, sometimes led him

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into innacuracies which the more studied care and circumspection of Johnson taught him to avoid. Though poetry is by no means the distinguished forte of either, yet they both stand high in the scale of poetical merit.

The characteristic features of style which we have noticed in their prose, stand forth likewise in their poetic compositions. The language of Johnson is frequently over-strained and turgid, and his verses sometimes too harsh to be pleasing. Addison, as we observed before, sometimes runs into redundancy by too earnest a desire of setting forth the full meaning of his idea in all the varied beauties of language. In poetry as in all his works, Johnson exhibits marks of strong genius, and that animated conciseness of style and lively illustration of character, which are particularly requisite in all satyrical and didactic compositions. The beauties of Addison's poetry shine forth in elegant and poetical expressions, mixed with a most fortunate imitation of the ancients. In the Dramatic walk Johnson must yield. No comparison whatever, can take place betwixt the author of Irene, and the admired writer of the tragedy of Cato; nor let him blush to yield, where all writers ancient and modern must confess their inferiority. It is

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without any hesitation or fear that I affirm, that the tragedy of Cato is one of the finest compositions of its kind, which in any age or in any country was ever produced.

It may not perhaps be moulded in every minute particular by the laws of dramatic writing, and it no doubt has its trifling imperfections, but they are like spots in the sun. Against however this small subtraction from the merits of Johnson, we have to oppose the superiority of his character as a critic, to Mr. Addison; and here a beautiful observation of Mr. Blair's, That "whatever enables genius to execute well, will enable taste to criticise justly," forcibly applies itself. The lives of the poets abound with the purest and most exact criticism. There is in general abundant reason given wherever a stricture is made, and the observations on our great epic poet Milton are far beyond any preceding criticism on his works. I am sorry, that the perusal of so valuable a collection of distinguished literary characters, should be embittered by any detection of private animosity or personal prejudice, or that malice should have had any sway in a mind, so elevated as that of Johnson was, but the reverence I bear, and the regard I feel for the writings of the late Mr. Gray, forces me

me to spurn an illiberal criticism on his works. When I observe Johnson paying a sneering compliment to the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, and a visible greater desire in him of exposing the faults, than of displaying the beauties of this admired poet, my mind appears to descend from viewing the summits of intellectual excellence, to note the frailty and imperfections of mortality. Perhaps no writer in modern times has given greater proofs of genius than Mr. Gray. In most of his compositions may be remarked a manner peculiar to himself, which is highly pleasing to any mind capable of relishing the sublime beauties of poetry, and gratifying to any ear which can be charmed, with the melody of sound. Mr. Mason has obliged us with such an account of his private character, as is an honor to humanity. I have to add, from information not universally known, that his account is strictly true; and have heard some anecdotes of him, from a very respectable gentleman now alive, who knew him at Cambridge, which bear witness in the strongest manner, to the good and amiable qualities of his heart.

But to return to our subject and to conclude. After fairly stating the respective literary merits of the these two admired English writers,

and balancing them in an even and unprejudiced manner, we can only determine, that each has his own separate characteristic beauties; and that the most comprehensive previous information respecting every subject, which they handle, equally appears in the writings of both; though the manner in which they influence our minds is widely different. The one never speaks but to enforce compliance, or reasons but to refute and to silence. The other charms us into conviction, by the brilliancy of his style, and the familiar manner in which he persuades. If then we are equally impelled, and incited from their labors to the practice of all moral duties, let equal credit be given to the performances. If we grant, that the ardor of Johnson is sufficient to invigorate the most sluggish disposition with the love of virtue, we must allow, that the elegant simplicity of Addison allures to the practice of it.

THE PRACTICE OF RELIGIOUS DUTIES THE ONLY FOUNDATION FOR SOLID AND UNALTERABLE HAPPINESS.

IF we consider happiness abstractedly in itself, as a science which all pursue with the greatest eagerness, and divest it of those false colors, in which it too frequently appears; we ſhould imagine, that there could be little difficulty in pronouncing those pleasures to be most valuable, and worthy the attainment of a rational Being which are in their continuance the most lasting, in their enjoyment the most tranquil, and in their expectations the most encouraging. We are taught by experience, that the gratifications of ſenſe, though dignified with the name of pleaſure, are in these reſpects highly defective and imperfect. Their duration is ſhort, their enjoyment is tumultuous, and the future hope of comfort presented to their votaries, is so far from giving a relish to the present moment, that it in a great meaſure destroys that small particle of animal gratification which they bestow. What future ſcenes of delight present themselves to the view

view of that wretch, who sunk in the arms of sensuality, and stupified by repeated intoxication, gradually impairs the faculties of his mind, or diminishes that fortune, which the bounty of Providence had intrusted to his care. Mankind are unfortunately too well acquainted with the last scene of such a one's life, to make it necessary for me to distress the mind, by dwelling on its horrors. The cultivation of reason, and the addition of intelligence, praiseworthy in the attempt, and honorable in the end, are surely pleasures more lasting in their continuance, and more tranquil in their enjoyment; but these are circumscribed in their expectations. In the exercise of religious duties alone, and in an endeavor to know, and to follow the will of our merciful Creator, are to be found these three grand essentials of human happiness. Many virtues in their exercise carry their own reward along with them, independent of their relative value to us, as connected with the will of the supreme Being; and it would therefore be our duty to practise them as rational creatures were we impelled by no higher motive than that alone. But when we practise them, because they are duties incumbent upon us, as heirs to eternity, the motive and the pleasure of performing

them is doubled. With respect indeed to literary labors, it has been said, that their end and their motive is fame only; and this, as it comes from the pen of the celebrated author of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, will perhaps be received by the incautious, as a truth which they may accede to; let not however motives more animating and valuable be withheld from the candidate for literary distinction. Let his studies be directed to their proper object, and we will applaud his conduct. Let him store his mind with knowledge, only that he may be the better enabled to discriminate the propriety of action; and let him ever remember, that though pleasing are the sallies of wit, and the rich satisfaction derived from the acquisitions of truth, yet sweet are the pleasures which flow from a well-regulated conscience, and glorious is that happiness which has immortality for its basis.

DEATH.

DEATH. I.

RAPE, CONGERE, AUFER, POSSIDE, RELINQUENDUM EST. MARTIAL.

THE importance of an early and an habitual preparation for death, is equally recommended and neglected by all. From the earliest ages of antiquity to the present time, the grand object of philosophy has uniformly been to fortify the soul against the fear, or to prepare it for the approach of death. To conquer the former was the highest ambition of Pagan wisdom, and to accomplish the latter is the great aim of the moralists of the present day: but it is a melancholy reflection to consider what little advantage is in general derived from that well known truth, that all must one day die. Those imperfect ideas, which the ancients possessed, respecting a future state of rewards and punishments, could not be supposed so thoroughly to arm the soul against its final separation from the body, to calm its terrors and erase its suspicions, as that glorious light, which is now revealed to mankind; but the

several instances of a noble contempt of death, displayed by *Socrates*, *Phocion*, *Epaminondas*, with many others of equal celebrity, must be acknowledged proportionably superior to any modern examples of composed, and determined firmness of soul at the hour of dissolution. It must strike the thinking mind, as a most fortunate circumstance for man, that God has ordained his existence here to be but of short duration. So numerous are the evils, which we daily suffer from casualties, and which we bring upon ourselves by our own contrivance, that Providence in pity to man, lest his burthen should be insupportable, and our existence an intolerable load, hath limited our misery to a short space of time. Indeed from the constitution of our frame, the greater our misery is, the less it is likely to continue; for repeated misfortunes, and affliction that canker of the mind, quickly relax the nerves of the most robust, and destroy the bloom of the most healthy body. An early death may often likewise be the greatest good, which can be experienced by our selves, or by our survivors. It may prevent us from the commission of crimes, which future imprudences might have made us deem necessary to our existence, or by hurrying us from this

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vale of tears, may free us from the anguish of unavoidable misfortunes. To the survivors the heaviest supposed loss may frequently be the richest gain. Behold that mother weeping over the dead body of her son, and foolishly supposing the cause of her grief not to be exceeded. Deluded woman, could the future events in thy son's life be laid open to thy view, couldst thou behold him starving in a garret, or exposed on a gibbet, the natural consequences of follies and of crimes, that eye which now swells with tears at his death, would then sparkle with joy, and that heart which now throbs with anguish and despair, would beat with pleasure and swell with gladness.

We have no good reason to suppose that the bare separation of the soul from the body, is attended with such painful sensations as human fears would suggest. It is the pomp of death, more than death itself, which terrifies and alarms the mind. We have the testimony of numbers, who have been as it were on the confines of eternity, and who have experienced every anguish and all the supposed horrors of death, down to the last gasp of expiring nature, yet the accounts which they bring us of the sensations which they have felt at that

important period, are by no means distressing or terrific. In this observation I particularly allude to persons who have been more than half drowned, and by human art have, as it were, been restored to existence, and I have received a confirmation of the doctrine, which I advance, from their own mouths. No one will suppose from what I have now said, that I am considering the state of the soul with regard to its preparation for eternity: that is not by any means what I have at present in view: I am only speaking of the mere bodily pain which we are supposed to undergo in our last moments, and numerous are the instances where this has been totally disregarded. An admired author speaking of death finely observes, " It is to the weakness of imagination that death owes its chief power of dejecting your spirits, for when the force of the mind is roused there is almost no passion in our nature, but what has shewn itself able to overcome the fear of death. Honor has defied death; love has despised it; shame has rushed upon it; revenge has disregarded it; grief a thousand times has wished for its approach. Having endeavoured to display the goodness of the Deity, in limiting our probationary residence here upon earth to a short period, and to prove

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that an early death may be often the greatest possible blessing both to ourselves and to our survivors: having shewn that in all probability the mere deprivation of existence is attended with no very painful sensations, and that the dread of extinction has at times been overcome by almost every passion we are subject to, all which we derive from common observation, we shall now consider what are the ideas which the light of nature suggests to our minds respecting death, whether it is the final termination of all our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows—That the soul does not die with the body, but survives in a state of greater happiness or misery than before, according as it has been virtuous or vicious here, we naturally infer from the justice of the Deity, for as God is a just Being, he will no doubt proportionate his rewards and punishments to the various degrees of merit, and as no such distinction is here made, as virtuous men are often exposed to the greatest distress, whilst the worst of men live and die in a series of prosperity, it is but reasonable to conclude, that there must be a future state of retribution for all men. To prove the immortality of the soul, Mr. Balguy draws a most ingenious argument from the sense of friendship rooted in the human heart,

which he observes in the minds of virtuous men creates a desire of enjoying each others company to all eternity, and which renders the thought of a final separation so shocking, that we cannot suppose the wise and benevolent author of our Being would permit us to enjoy so great a blessing here, without intending that it should be continued to us for ever. Upon like principles we may add, that as the love of God naturally increases in the virtuous mind, a dread of the extinction of being will be more painful in proportion to that advance, as all enjoyment of God must of course then cease when we cease to be. And the importance of this idea both illustrates Balguy's remark, and is strongly illustrated by it. Another argument in favor of a future state may be drawn from the consideration, that according to the ordinary course of nature, the continuation of our existence greatly depends upon our own will and that of others. If the soul were mortal, a villain might immediately deprive the most virtuous and honorable man of his existence, and doing so at once cut off all hopes of any future reward for his virtues. Upon the same supposition the most guilty wretch, by laying violent hands upon himself, might put an end to all further punishment intended for and due to

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his crimes, and thus frustrate the justice of God; but as God is a just and omnipotent Being, his justice cannot be frustrated. To these arguments for the soul's immortality, I might add the force of conscience, which is sometimes so great as to operate upon sinners in their dying moments, when they have least to fear from their fellow-creatures, with many others which the limited bounds of this paper prevent me from mentioning. I shall conclude with observing, that the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments, has in all ages and in all countries been a received opinion, from the earliest times of antiquity to the present day, and is therefore a truth apparent from the general testimony of mankind, to doubt which is to incur universal detestation. What mind but views with horror so dismal a prospect as that of total annihilation, and revolts at so uncheering a doctrine, whether it discovers itself under the fascinating charms of ancient eloquence, or pollutes the modern writings of a *Hume*.

DEATH.

DEATH. II.

THIS LIFE IS A SCENE OF VANITY THAT SOON PASSES AWAY, AND AFFORDS NO SOLID SATISFACTION BUT IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF DOING WELL, AND IN THE HOPES OF ANOTHER LIFE. ADDISON.

IT must be an agreeable reflection to the philosophical mind to consider, that those glorious truths, which in former ages were concealed from human eyes, or but partially comprehended by some one eminent for superior efforts of genius and industry, are now every where propagated and dispersed. Since the light of revelation has been shed upon mankind, the poorest and most illiterate mechanic entertains more exalted sentiments of God and the divine attributes, than formerly were possessed by the wisest of men in Athens or in Rome. Would to God we made half so good an use of the blessings we experience. Though at all times the Christian enjoys unspeakable privileges and blessings, unfelt by the professors of any other religion; yet at no time does he derive so great consolation and such sublime pleasure, as at that period when human weak-

weakness stands most in need of support. At the hour of death his situation is truly glorious. The reflections on a well spent life calm the tumults of the soul on its approaching separation from the body. The approbation of a righteous and omnipotent Creator, perhaps at that time more sensibly felt and experienced, cheers and fortifies it against the last final conflict. And what are its hopes and expectations? They are full of immortality and glory. The pleasures which we derive from reflection are universally allowed to be most pure and sincere, and so worthy the ambition of a rational Being, that it has been imagined that they will constitute great part of our happiness in another world. The thought of having performed a good or kind action, affords us one of the highest mental satisfactions which we can enjoy. It is heightened by repetition, and may be supposed to operate most powerfully at that period, when the shafts of envy will be pointed in vain, and when all rival clamors and jealousies will be silent and forgotten. We must allow the divine approbation of our conduct to be of the greatest importance in our dying moments. Conscience will then strike the mind in so forcible a manner, as to leave no opportunity of palliating our faults. If we

have acted wrong our crimes will then start up against us in their real colors. The glare of prosperity may for awhile have dazzled us, and intercepted our view of them, but the charm will not now hold any longer. From this we may argue, that to possess a confidence that we enjoy the divine approbation at that time, is to enjoy it. But that blessing which above all others distinguishes a Christian at the hour of death, is the certain reward which he knows his virtues are then about to inherit, for by the gospel is life and immortality brought to light. Whatever odium his exemplary conduct may have incurred during his residence upon earth, it is now at an end. As he lived not for this world, so is his reward placed elsewhere, a reward eternal, prepared for him in the Heavens; its magnitude and duration equally incomprehensible, great, and glorious, for what it is, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Is then the prospect of obtaining so great a reward worth contending for? Can any thing we now suffer be compared with an eternity of consummate felicity? Are not all our present afflictions but as dust in the balance when set in competition with the joys of Heaven, and is there any thing in

this world one moment worth engaging our serious attention? Let me then recommend a good life as the best preparation for a happy death. Let me remind you, that you are now acting your part in the presence of him, who minutely sets down the most trifling of your actions, and who will proportionate his rewards and punishments, according to the various degrees of wickedness or virtue.

ON

ON EPISTOLARY WRITING.

I KNOW not of any more pleasing or ornamental qualification than that of wtiting a letter well. Instruction in this elegant accomplishment, is in general most shamefully neglected in the modern education of youth, and the neglect productive of the most serious ill-consequences; of ill-consequences, which at one time a very little trouble on the part of the master, and a small degree of attention from the pupil, might have effectually prevented. To deliver our thoughts with ease in correct and proper language, equally remote from all appearance of labor and study, as from carelessness and inattention, is universally allowed to be the great excellence of speaking well. In Epistolary Writing, which is nothing more than the language of conversation committed to paper the same rules are necessary to be observed. The same attention to all those proper degrees of respect which our own character and that of others demands from us, is necessary in the one as well as in the other, but there is this difference in their consequences,

quences, that in the one an unpleasant word or harsh expression may be misunderstood, or in time thought no more of, in the other as long as the paper exists, *Litera ſcripta manet*, and the oftener it is read, it may kindle afresh and revive those passions, which but for this written evidence against us might have subsided and been forgotten. For this reason it becomes a maxim of prudence to be extremely careful in giving vent to the transports of anger in irritating and reproachful expressions committed to writing, however great and just we may suppose our provocation to be. Amongst the ancients Pliny and Cicero seem principally to have excelled as letter writers; of the former it has been said that his epistles have the appearance of being too much studied, and that they seem to have been written with a view to the future good opinion of the world on their merits. Indeed it is not easy to conceive how a man, who writes under an idea that the public will one day have the perusal of his letters, should express himself with that ease which he would do, were he persuaded his letter would be read only by the person to whom it is addressed. He will be insensibly aiming at those graces and embellishments of style, which are so inconsistent with that ease

and familiarity of diction, which should always subsist in the private correspondencies of friends. The letters of Cicero are entirely exempt from any charge of this nature. From his own testimony in a letter to his friend Atticus, we learn that he had not himself any possible idea of their being made public, which no doubt greatly added to their value. They are indeed the most elegant collection of letters which are exstant in any language, and much gratitude is due to his freedman Tyro, who carefully collected them after his master's death. It is something remarkable that amidst a nation so civilized as the English, who have displayed so manifest a superiority in all the different kinds of style and composition, there should be such a paucity of familiar epistles betwixt men of genius submitted to the public eye. Except the official letters to statesmen, and those which stand upon record in the annals of history, I know of few others of much eminence amongst us, which are properly speaking familiar letters; for I am not now considering such as my Lord Shaftſbury's with other letter writers of that stamp, who wrote in the epistolary style, merely as an agreeable method of conveying their sentiments to the world. Those letters which are published in

the editions of Pope and Swift between themselves, Addison, Arbuthnot, &c. are in my opinion by much the most valuable in our language, unless the pleasure which I always feel in reading the different compositions of the late Dr. Johnson, makes me desirous of adding his name to the number. Prejudice will not however carry me so far as to affirm, that letter writing is by any means his forte, but I may fairly say he attempts nothing which he does not execute well. The same noble and generous sentiments expressed in the same correct and manly language, are to be met with in his epistolary correspondence, as those which we so much admire in the pages of the Rambler; yet we cannot help lamenting that there is sometimes that want of ease in the construction of his sentences, which we noticed on a former occasion in his compositions, and which in epistolary writings is particularly unfortunate. In the collection mentioned above, there are several letters well worthy of our most serious attention, particularly those from Arbuthnot and Swift. The letters of Pope are certainly fine writings, but there is a visible appearance of too much art in the structure of the sentences. Arbuthnot is in general easy and unaffected, perspicuous and correct. Swift

is uniformly so, nor can the severest criticism justly censure his merit as an epistolary writer. Indeed the idea which we have of him, from reading his other compositions would make us readily conclude, that he must have been a most accomplished letter writer, had he not left us such convincing proofs of his celebrity in that species of composition. It is a mortification to the curiosity of a literary mind, to be in a great measure debarred from the pleasure of viewing the characters and habits of men of genius, through the medium of their private correspondence. Grave or more studied compositions may make us acquainted with the merit of an author, but in these we should more particularly discover the features of his character as a man.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF ADVERSITY CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO OUR PRESENT SITUATION, AND AS THE BEST SCHOOL FOR VIRTUE.

SENECA records a noble saying of Demetrius, "That nothing would be more unhappy than a man who had never known adversity." He was so far from thinking uninterrupted prosperity essential to perfect happiness, that he seems to have considered it as the very reverse, as the root and source of the most extreme misery. To those who are rolling in affluence, and daily partaking of the good things of this world, whose ears are shut against the cries of want, and whose hearts are steeled against the recitals of distress, a doctrine so repugnant to their interests, will be sufficiently displeasing and mortifying, but it will cheer and exhilarate those upon whom Providence hath thought proper to inflict calamities, whether as a punishment for their crimes, or as a trial of their perseverance in virtue, who repine in obscurity at the miseries of poverty and of pain. The advantages of adversity are numerous with respect to the regulation of our conduct in this present world,

as well as inestimable when we consider them as conducive to the happiness of a future state. His ruined fortune and consequently degraded situation, may teach the youthful profligate, to avoid those rocks of extravagance and folly, upon which he has split, should fortune smile upon his future labors. The blessings attending a competency would then come upon him with a double relish, from his having been so long deprived of them, as the light of day comes doubly welcome to those, who have for some time been immured in dungeons and darkness. To take the idea in a larger scale, we may affirm, that there is no true and sublime pleasure, but what is procured at the expence of pain in some degree or other. Curiosity is the great spring of action and stimulus to industry, in liberal and virtuons minds: but curiosity is not to be always gratified without much trouble, and without encountering and surmounting numerous difficulties and obstacles. They are inseparable from the acquisition of knowledge. Yet is not the pain we undergo in search of intellectual pleasure, amply rewarded by the acquisition of information, and are not the repeated fatigues of the body cheered by our contemplating the completion of the object which we have in view? What

is there worth having which is to be obtained without labor? It appears then, that adversity and troubles are of essential service, to the proper regulation of our conduct here upon earth, and that pain generally precedes and is instrumental towards our enjoying the sublimest pleasure. Let us now reflect upon the utility of adversity in a religious point of view, as the happiest school for the cultivation and increase of virtue, and consequently conducive to our happiness in a future world. In the sunshine of prosperity our follies are concealed from our view; we are too much taken up with our own importance, to imagine there can be any impropriety in our conduct and actions, but adversity takes off the mask, and men appear to themselves in their real colors. The languor of a debilitated constitution will gradually depress the spirits of the vivacious, and turn their attention from the gaudy scenes with which this world abounds, to that period when they will for ever vanish from their view. Riches, and that influence which riches create, are the pillars, on which men in general rear the edifice of their happiness. Take these from them, and you take away their ordinary resource. The arts of venal friends will not then be exerted in their favor, and it is then

that they begin to feel a want of the aid and and assistance of a superior Being, and are conscious of the follies and wickednesses of their past lives. A course of piety, of repentance and reformation will then commence, and then is the time for forming and fixing good habits in the mind. The sincere penitent will then proceed with firmness in discharging his duty. The gloom of adversity will exhilarate him more than ever he was enlivened by the sunshine of prosperity. He will then place his confidence in God alone, and feel the value of a redeeming Savior. He will taste the sweets of an approving conscience, and enjoy the reflection that if the mutability of this world has made him unfortunate, it has likewise made him virtuous. Externally he may feel the blows of adversity, but he will no longer know the torments of a wounded spirit.

THOUGHTS ON THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE.

FROM the light of nature, we have no very distinct notions how far the justice of God will permit him at all to forgive the penitent, much less can we have such assurances of mercy, as cheerfully to depend upon the pardon of our sins, how great soever they may have been. It has been asserted by some, that as God is a Being of infinite goodness, the slightest deviation from those laws which his eternal wisdom hath thought proper to ordain for the good of mankind, must be in itself a fatal evil. Others again, from observing that apparent provision, which exists in the world of nature for the necessities and calamities of mankind, even those which men bring upon themselves by their own imprudences, have embraced a more comfortable doctrine, and maintained, that there are some sins at least of a milder cast, which may be forgiven; for was God determined to punish the slightest deviation from rectitude without mercy, (seeing that men of all ages, and in all situations of life are both internally

and

and externally exposed to temptation) where, say they, would consist the benevolence, not to say justice of the Deity? Unassisted reason can, however, carry men no further in their speculations, on this favorable side of the question. By no means can we certainly and universally conclude, that all sin shall be pardoned on repentance; for let us consider what is the end of punishment. Punishment is not only inflicted for the amendment of our own lives, but as an example for the lives of others, and to maintain the honor of the divine government. Now we cannot take upon us to say, but that sometimes in cases of notorious crimes, perfect justice may require severity even against penitents themselves. It appears then from reason, that there is a probability that some sins may be forgiven, though it can by no means be proved that all sin will. Those glorious attributes of the deity, which christianity has unfolded to mankind, have dispelled the various uncertainties of reason, concerning the moral government of God. We are expressly told, that God willeth not the death of a sinner; but rather that he should repent and live. Now the first thing towards a sincere repentance is, the confession of our sins, which is in itself an act of many virtues. It is an instrument

strument of shame and condemnation of our sins, particularly called by Joshua in the case of Achan, a glorification of God. By confession of our sins we acknowledge the justice of God, and are assessors with God in our own condemnation. St. Paul expressly exhorts us to it upon this inducement, that by this act of judging ourselves, we escape the more angry judgement of God. Indeed the confession of our sins forms so necessary a part of the duty of repentance, that in different parts of Scripture, it is set forth as the immediate preface to pardon, and forms a constituent part of that grace, which together with faith makes up the whole duty of a Christian. But a proper use of the exercise of repentance, is not to be made in the crowded scenes of busy life, in the haunts of folly and extravagance, but in retirement and solitude. The human mind must have no other object but itself to contemplate, when it seriously descends into itself. In the public intercourse of society, pursuits of pleasure and of interest will attract its attention, and divest it of every inducement to consider its own state. Take away these auxiliaries of vice, and you deprive men of their usual resource to lull conscience asleep. That heart which was once the most hardened, solitary confinement has been

been known to soften, and those feelings which a long intercourse with mankind had blunted, have melted into humanity, when the objects which dissipated their attention have been banished from their view. In this respect, as well as for his every other laudable undertaking, the name of Howard must for ever be mentioned with gratitude throughout the universe, for the noble improvements, which he has suggested on the punishment of criminals. What eye but swells with tears in surveying the accounts of those numerous executions which the welfare of the public requires, and which stigmatize the wretched age we live in? If credit be due to the impartial administration of justice in securing the lives and properties of individuals, what glory and honor must await the character of that man, who with the eye of humanity, discovered a way to defeat the pain and ignominy of punishment, by the prevention of crimes, and who in the dignified language of Scripture, may be said to have *turned many to righteousness*?

ARGU-

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST A PUBLIC EDUCATION.

IN the greatest and most civilized nations of antiquity, as well as in the most polished of modern times, the opinions of learned men, have widely differed with regard to the education of youth. The Greeks, particularly the Spartans, were amongst the first who held forth the advantages of a public education, whilst the Romans, as we are told by Suetonius, were prejudiced in favor of a private one. These however are only the characteristic sentiments of these nations in general on this head—we know for certain, that difference of opinion subsisted betwixt individuals of the same country on this important subject. The arguments on each side of the question, are so numerous and so hackneyed, that much new light cannot now be thrown on the subject. I shall content myself therefore, with delivering the opinions of others, though I may now and then make an observation of my own. A private education in the first place, has been said to promote virtue and good breeding a public school manly

assurance, and an early knowledge in the ways of the world; and from this Mr. Locke asserts, that as virtue is much more difficult to be attained than knowledge of the world, and as vice is a more stubborn, as well as a more dangerous fault than sheepishness, so the tuition of a private preceptor for youth is much to be preferred to that of a public one. He adds that he does not see why a youth with right management, might not attain the same degree of assurance in his father's house, as at a public school; and advises parents to accustom their sons to whatever strange faces come to the house, to take them with them when they visit their neighbors, and to engage them in conversation with men of parts and breeding. It may be objected to this, that such conversation as would benefit youth, is not always to be found in the conversation of those of riper years, that the assurance which a young man could obtain in his father's house, and in the circle of private acquaintance, will not always enable him to display a distinguished firmness of mind on the great theatre of the world, and that those ideas of self-importance which very possibly may be formed in such a society, will more probably impede, than promote his advancement in life. Unless he holds conversation,

tion, with such as are in some measure his equals in parts and years, several of the most lively passions of the mind such as emulation, contention, &c. will lie dormant, and without any object to draw forth their exertion, they will most probably in time contract a dulness and insensibility. To this we may add, that being removed at a distance from all foolish and improper indulgences, the mind is early taught to depend upon itself, as a resource in all emergencies, and this in my opinion is a very great argument in favor of a public education. The same tricks and deceptions which men practise in riper years, are performed in miniature at school, the detection of which will afford to youth an useful knowledge of the ways of the world, which they are to live in. On the other side of the question, the advocates for private tuition say, that the generality of public school masters, are by no means adequate to the undertaking themselves, and much less those ushers and assistants which they frequently employ. We grant the advantages of a public education, say they, to those whose fortune or interest can command a reception for their sons at those noble seminaries of knowledge, Eton, the Charter House, Westminster, with a few others of perhaps

equal

equal celebrity, where the value of the stipend will always induce men of genius and learning to contend for the appointment; but this is only the advantage of a few. The case is in general widely different. Those who most commonly preside at the head of public schools are from the smallness of their income, prevented from employing any, or at least proper assistants in the business of education; hence it frequently happens that the master possesses scholars, to whose instruction on account of their numbers it is impossible he can do justice. Indeed the fault rests in the age we live in. Whilst every other profession meets with its proper encouragement and proportionate reward, I know not how it happens, that that of a school master is in general slighted and treated with the greatest contempt. Surely it is a most important and respectable office, when properly filled, and the only reason why men of liberal education are not willing to undertake the task, arises from that small compensation, which parents are willing to allow them for their labors. The idea of forming brilliant and powerful connections through the channel of a public school appears to me a false one. I have seldom known good, but frequently much harm arise from unequal friendships

ships in the early periods of life. They must unavoidably to say no worse, create an introduction into unnecessary expence, and when men stand most in need of assistance from their former companions, we shall often find them experience the coldest neglect, perhaps marked with the keenest contempt. Nor is this neglect to be wondered at. That variety of new objects which is continually presenting itself to the youthful mind, will naturally tend to efface the remembrance of the past; and how few are those friendships which absence will not lessen, if not entirely destroy?

POETRY.

DIALOGUE,

BETWEEN

A CRITIC AND THE AUTHOR.

Author.

CRITICS severe I pray attend,
Some small advice I fain would lend,
And in my book would fix it:
These verses ne'er were wrote for you,
Or had they been, in faith 'tis true,
We take no ipse dixit.

Critic.

False feet, false grammar, worse than all
False spelling too, by holy Paul,
Rise Priscian and protect us;
Sure scribbling now is quite a frolic,
Disorder worse to cure than cholic,
When pangs severely vex us.

Author.

Your verdict's right, sir, 'tis confest,
But come be candid make the best
Of these my young endeavors;
Rot it! What not one decent line!
Alas, that's hard. Pray, sir, define,
What you expect now from us.

Critic.

Why, sir, we critics make a rule,
One fault espy'd, to damn the whole
Of literary labors.
What we don't see, can ne'er be seen,
Or weak, alas, would be I wean
Our critical endeavors.

Author.

Well, sir, if this your humor is
No pedant quaint or book-worm quiz
Shall e'er gain my attention;
To lib'ral minds I now appeal,
Who'll give the praise, that's due they feel
To laudable intention.

FATAL EFFECTS
OF
GOLD.

AURUM PER MEDIOS IRE SATELLITES,
ET PERRUMPERE AMAT SAXA, POTENTIUS
ICTTU FULMINEO. HOR.

WHEN Heav n first order'd the Almighty plan,
And reason's sacred aid bestow'd on man;
In those blest days which poets golden name,
Truth pass'd for truth, and justice had from fame;
No envy rankled in the gen'rous breast,
No heart rejoic'd at suff'ring worth opprest;
No dire assassin drew the murd'ring sword,
Nor crav'd the slave mild usage from his Lord;
But times are alter'd, truth no longer sways,
Injurious malice taints its pristine rays.
Big swoln with venom o'er each country spread,
Now tyrant vice uprears her Hydra head;
In various forms she courts, assails the ear
With flatt'ry's poison, praise to fools most dear.
Now paints the joys of sense in youthful dream,
With wealth's alluring charms now decks the scene.
Oh cursed gold! thou source of ev'ry ill,
Nurse of each crime, which hist'ry's annals fill;

Unheard of torture sure the fates decree
To him, the wretch who first discover'd thee.
By Styx's waves, far from Sol's cheering ray,
May his tir'd shade full long a wand'rer stray.
Of such deluding charms to man aware
From mortal eye kind nature hid the glare;
But ruthless fate the dreadful secret told,
And shew'd where lay the all-corrupting gold.
'Twas gold alone made thy proud glories fall,
Majestic Rome, thou states-subduing all.
Queen of the subject world, imperial, free!
Thou nurse of heroes, source of liberty.
And Athens parent of each happy art,
Which fires the fancy, or which warms the heart.
Say shall the bard, who boasts poetic fire,
Unnotice thy decay, who strung his lyre?
Or Palestine of earlier times the boast
Where now the towns that crown'd thy wealthy coast?
Where now the groves prolific of their oil,
Where the blest swains that till'd thy sacred soil:
All all are fled from gold's all-conq'ring pow'r,
Nations to ruin sink, to rise, no more.
Be fame like their's, O Albion, still thy boast,
Ne'er may their fate invade thy favor'd coast;
May Attic riches still exalt thy name,
And martial honors give thee Roman fame;
And may that pow'r, whose hand all blessing yields;
With Syrian plenty, ever crown thy fields.

Nor where the Georgian Star paternal reigns,
Shall gallic demons e'er lay waste the plains.
Ill-fated France! to each black pest a prey,
By night th' assassin, Guillotine by day!
What muse the tribute of a tear but pays,
When all thy ruin'd greatness she surveys,
And sees th' effect of golds all-conq'ring pow'r,
Thy glories faded, sunk to rise no more?
No common crimes, which plagu'd mankind before,
Spoil thy fair fields, or blast thy vine-clad shore:
Sure, Heav'n, in vengeance to a guilty land,
Unheard of monsters rose at thy command
The Roman Cæsars, who with savage mind
Their thousands murder'd, butchers of mankind,
Nor eastern princes, who in guilty state
Their orders issue, delegates of fate;
Nor aught, which hist'ry tells, with these compare,
Their crimes so various, cruelties so rare.
But droops my muse, unwont, unfit to sing
Of ruin'd greatness, and a murder'd king.
With joy we hear the epic muse impart
The lofty themes, that grace poetic art.
Alas! the bramble vainly strives to vie
With the majestic pine, that dares the sky.
In Homer's strains let Virgil's muse rehearse.
Be mine the easy negligence of verse.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF MR. HOWARD.

QUIS DESIDERIO SIT PUDOR, AUT MODUS
TAM CHARI CAPITIS? HOR.

IN plaintive numbers, melancholy, slow,
Are oft recorded tales of direst woe,
To catch compassion's eye:
But wake, Melpomene, a graven strain,
Than e'er breath'd Waller, or the Mantuan swain;
For Howard asks a sigh.

His inborn dignity of mind disdain'd
The marble honors, tho' so justly gain'd,
For virtue, scorns a bribe;
But feeling nations now his praise proclaim,
And captives freed, that freedom to the name
Of Howard loud ascribe.

'Twas his the quick-descending tear to dry,
The tear, that left the anguish-swollen eye,
Soft while he dropped his own;
A pearl so rich not Indian realms afford,
So bright, so pure, so grateful to its Lord,
Its purchase ne'er was known.

But Howard sinks, th' unweari'd mind no more
For hapless mortals toils. Thrice happy shore!
Where his blest ashes rest.
There shall at least the sacred flame be caught,
And there at least shall selfish man be taught
By blessing to be blest.

Yet, Britain, thou first gave the glorious birth,
Thy great examples first implanted worth
That dazzled all mankind:
Still then, O ever venerate his name,
May future ages long record the fame
Of Howard's godlike mind.

CONTENT.

LÆTUS IN PRÆSENS, ANIMUS QUOD ULTRA EST
ODERIT CURARE, ET AMARA LENTO
TEMPERET RISU, NIHIL EST AB OMNI
PARTE BEATUM. HOR.

NOT wealth's gay play-things, not the glitt'ring toys,
Which fashion dictates to her vot'ries gay,
Compar'd, sweet loveliest maid, with thy pure joys,
Shall from this pen e'er drag one feeble lay.

The fleeting joys, which sport in pleasure's stream,
Awhile engage our young unthinking years;
Full soon we find our happiness a dream,
And nought remains, save penitence and tears.

Behold yon moth around the lambent flame
Encircling play, and shake his dusky wings;
Behold he now one moment and the same
Tastes the bright joy, and to destruction springs.

Man, could this lesson teach thy thoughtless mind
The pangs of pain and ruin to forego,
From charms which reason dictates wouldst thou find,
Joy sought in vain from scenes of splendid woe.

Hail blest Content! be ever then my guest
Domestic joy, the joy of mutual love,
Unenvied though my lot, howe'er opprest,
I scorn those guilty joys, which greatness move.

Let others praise the organ's swelling peal,
The lyre's sweet notes, the clarion's warlike sound,
Music more dear my children's voice I feel,
Their harmless prate my ev'ning fire around.

No splendid gifts from fortune's hand I bear,
Obscure my state and humble is my cot;
Yet, Heav'n, I thank thee for those goods I share,
And bless that day *Eliza* was my lot.

CHISTMAS DAY.

THE low'ring clouds forsake the sky
And nature smiles serene and gay;
Welcome the light invades my eye
Which gilds my Savior's natal day.

The bird of dawn, unwont to sing
At midnight hour, records the tale;
And pleas'd the joyful news to bring
The bee exults in honied cell.

Hail! sacred morn, which gave the birth,
And brought to man the joyful tale
Of Christ's appearance, peace on earth,
Redemption's sacred herald, hail!

Now white-rob'd Truth in splendor bright
Emerg'd from darkness darts her ray,
And flying from the Heav'nly light,
No Pagan mists obscure the day.

Jesus! who can thy deeds explain,
Their cause explore, or tell thy love?
Found in thyself, from thee it came,
Thy blood its greatness sure may prove.

That precious blood, whose mingled stream
Pour'd life for all thy worth could save;
And this was all: thou didst redeem
Each breast, that owns thee, from the grave.

Thy grace is his, who in thy name
Humbly prefers the pious pray'r,
The purchas'd pardon he may claim,
Whose faith is firm, and grief sincere.

Source of thyself, thou underiv'd,
Thy creature's child, creation's Lord,
O spare and save, e'er we are gone
To join the unrepenting dead.

Rich are thy mercies, great thy pow'r,
My feeling soul attests thy love;
To thee allied, e'en now the hour
It tastes, which gives the joys above.

ON A MELANCHOLY EVENT WHICH TOOK PLACE OFF THE SUFFOLK COAST, IN THE YEAR 1792.

FAIR was the morn, th' Oliva spread her sails,
A chearful prospect brighten'd all around,
Smoothly she ran before the gentle gales,
As for a prosp'rous voyage hap'ly bound.

But dark is fate, down by this dang'rous shore.
What coast so dang'rous circles Britain's isle?
Aground she ran, where nought but surges roar,
Or circling waves the mariner beguile.

The trembling wretches see at once their fate,
No hope of succor softens their distress;
The shrowds aloft they climb, the hour to wait,
The last sad hour of human wretchedness.

Ah! what avails the gently swelling breeze
When destin'd fate forbids the bark to glide?
What boots it, that the kind surrounding seas
Encircling play, where ships securely ride?

And see yon mariners from Lowestoft's shore,
That pitying view the horrors of their state;
That fain would snatch them from the surges' roar,
Ah! see they trembling leave them to their fate.

Too well they know the dangers of the place,
Full many a wreck has taught them to beware;
Tho' arm'd with hope they'd ev'ry danger face,
Yet fear is prudence, when 'tis death to dare.

What strikes my eye? O Heav'ns, a bitter sight!
Th' inverted vessel now proclaims their doom.
No more they view the blessings of the light,
But find a silent solitary tomb.

Such oft the fate of man: to day we sail
Down a smooth current, fann'd by fortune's breeze,
Nor dread to-morrow's sun, which wakes the gale,
That ruthless drives us to tempestuous seas.

AVARO.

AVARO sitting at his ease,
Recounting over all his gold,
By farthing light a spectre sees,
A lank tall object pale and old.

What dost thou want? Avaro cries,
I've money none to give to thee;
My scanty purse but ill supplies
Raiment and food alone for me.

Aught that I've else do freely take,
Nor thou deem light my proffered boon,
My heart feels sorrow for thy sake,
But money, faith, to give I've none.

Content, the spectre grim replies,
Nor money ask, nor wish for I:
'Tis Death appears before thine eyes,
'Tis thee I want, and thou must die.

He fix'd the sharp unerring dart,
And straight he drew the fatal bow;
The piercing steel divides his heart,
Avaro sinks to realms below.

POPE's UNIVERSAL PRAYER

IMITATED.

SUPREME o'er all, o'er all the same,
Alike benign and wise;
Tho' various forms express thy name,
Thy nature never dies.

Thou great Eternal! who first taught
My feeble mind to know,
How much thy love exceeded aught
In this dark vale below.

Tho' nature's laws fast bound in fate
Leave free the human will,
Thy pitying mercy cheers our state,
And shews us good from ill.

Still may this light attract my view
On duties to be done;
Good may I more than gold pursue,
And guilt than want more shun.

If rich my lot, with pious care
May I relieve distress;
If small of earthly goods my share,
Yet poverty can bless.

Man not alone thy pow'r adores,
Nor earth thy goodness bounds;
They shine where mortal eye ne'er soars
In wide creation's rounds.

Let me not impious dare to call
A neighbor's zeal unjust;
Thy mercy shines as light on all
Who in that mercy trust.

If thou approv'st the pray'r I make,
Still may I make the same;
If I am wrong, may grace awake
Right knowledge of thy name.

May pride ne'er make my heart elate,
Nor poverty depress;
Should pow'r or riches be my fate,
Or should fell want distress.

Another's failings keen to spy,
  May I not hide my own,
Before thy great Almighty eye
  Deceit is ever known.

Tho' mean is man, th' eternal fire
  Pervades his mortal clay;
To kindred skies our souls aspire,
  And long to bend their way.

On earth, nor wealth, nor pow'r I crave;
  Lord, be my will resign'd;
One blessing add to what I have,
  A firm contented mind.

Glory to thee, whose pow'r supreme
  Extends thro' all extent;
Jove or Jehovah, still the same,
  Sole Good! Omnipotent.

PARIS TO HELEN.

FROM Priam's son, fair Helen, this receive
In health, which thou alone to him can'st give.
Must I then speak, or need I not reveal,
What e'en in silence but appears too well?
Fain I'd my love disguise, till fate decrees
Unmix'd with fear our taste of joy and ease;
But ill I act my part, as who essays
Fire to conceal, which its own light betrays?
Yet if you wish my words should truth proclaim;
For thee I die, let these reveal my flame.
I own, now spare me, nor divest that face,
By frowns contemptuous, of its wonted grace.
You read my letter——this a hope can give,
That you the writer will as kind receive.
I ask what is decreed; for not in vain
Did Venus prompt this journey thee to gain;
Nor sin thou ign'rant; heav'nly impulse drove
Me here; not trifling she, who guides our love.
Great's the reward I claim, but not undue,
For Venus to my wishes promis'd you.
By her conducted from Sigean shores,
Thro' Grecian seas we ply'd our lab'ring oars;

She calm'd each storm, and sped our easy way,
Sprung from the sea, she justly claims its sway.
Go on, fair goddess, and as seas are kind,
So may my Helen ease this anxious mind.
Nor think that now I boast a recent flame;
By love compell'd from sacred Troy I came;
Nor tempest dire, nor error drove our oars,
Our ships were steer'd to reach the Spartan shores.
No search for wealth allur'd me o'er the wave,
May but the Gods preserve what now I have;
Nor Grecian cities to behold I come,
Fairer, more splendid towns, I view at home.
'Tis thee I seek, and long'd for when unknown,
Whom beauteous Venus promis'd for my own.
Fame first abroad proclaim'd thy matchless grace,
And long my mind beheld thee ere my face.
*Nor disbelieve me, Helen, for, I vow,
Fame is but envy when it speaks of you;
More than I sought I find, and, pleas'd, behold
Thy form surpassing what thy fame foretold.
Theseus might well exult in such a flame,
He view'd a booty worthy of his aim.
As in the dance with Spartan youths you join'd,
And all thy naked beauties struck his mind;

* 104 Lines omitted, doubtful in the original, if genuine.

The theft I praise, but wonder, that he knew
His prize no better than restoring you.
Sooner than they had dragg'd thee from my bed,
From off this neck they should have pull'd my head;
Would I alive have yielded up thy charms?
Could human force have torn thee from mine arms?

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Trust but thy Paris, and his firmness prove,
The fun'ral fire alone should end my love;
Kingdoms which Juno promis'd I despise,
And spurn an empire, which with Helen vies.
The blue-ey'd goddess promis'd might in arms,
Pleas'd I the gift resign'd to share thy charms;
Nor e'er repent, or foolish deem the deed,
Warm I remain in hopes I thee shall wed.
Damp not my ardent wish, all-beauteous fair,
Worthy of all my labor, all my care:
Nor think thy suitor sprung from common race,
My spouse to be, will Helen not disgrace.
Not kingly ancestors alone are mine,
Jove and Electra stamp our race divine;
On Asian plains my father holds command,
Rich is the soil, unbounded is the land;

Unnumber'd cities, gilded roofs, are our's,
And temples worthy the celestial pow'rs.
There strike the eye, uprear'd by hands divine,
Troy's lofty walls; its sacred turrets shine;
Fertile in men, why need I boast our might,
The land scarce holds our heros for the fight.
On thy approach our dames will line the way,
And more than fill my halls, respect to pay;
Oft wilt thou say, one house doth here contain
The wealth of cities, where I late did reign:
Yet ill it fits, that I should Sparta blame,
Still dear's the soil, from whence my Helen came;
Yet poor is Sparta to thy beauteous face;
Its charms might well a scene more splendid grace.
A frame like thine should silken vestment press,
With all the rich variety of dress:
View but our men, and from their gay attire,
Think what a form like Helen's must require.
Born in Therapne's land, be kind, my fair,
Nor spurn a husband rear'd in Phrygian air.
The same was he descended of our blood,
Who now hands wine to Jove's celestial food.
Tithonus too was nurs'd in Phrygian arms,
And hence remov'd enjoys Aurora's charms.
Anchises too on Ida's top caress'd
The queen of love, and clasp'd her to his breast.
With me in age or beauty to compare,
Yourself the judge, I Menelaus dare.

Like him I blush not with a guilty sire
Whose acts nefarious rous'd Apollo's ire;
No bloody Pelops in our race we weep,
Whose monstrous crimes new named th' Egean deep;
Nor doth my grandsire's father now sustain
Pain of perpetual thirst on Stygian plain;
Yet vain is all, if he enjoys thy love,
Jove's daughter you, he ranks the son of Jove.
Gods! what a sin, that he whole nights should toy
In thy embrace, and all thy charms enjoy!
I only view thee when the board is laid,
And then what serious griefs my soul invade;
When wine comes on, such treats as these, I vow,
Proceed not from a friend, but from a foe;
And when his rustic arms have thee caress'd,
Twin'd round thy neck, I've curs'd the plenteous feast.
Now envy swells me; yet why all things tell,
To see him touch thy tucker: fiends and hell!
And when you give him no unwilling kiss,
With lifted cup I turn, nor see his bliss.
With downcast eyes I view yet greater ills,
While unchew'd meat swells in the mouth it fills.
Oft times I've groan'd, and seen you mark my groan,
And wanton laugh to think that I could moan.
To drown my love I drink with fruitless aim,
Wine but gives force to love, adds flame to flame.
His bliss no more to see reclin'd I fall,
But your soft eyes admonish and recal.

What should I do? it grieves me this to see,
Yet grieves me more to turn my face from thee.
In deep disguise to hide my ceaseless pain
All that I can I strive, but strive in vain.
You know my anguish, why need words reveal,
What but from you I gladly would conceal.
How oft with tearful eyes I've turn'd my face,
Lest when I weep thy husband guess the case.
Oft flush'd with wine I've prais'd my fav'rite fair,
And fix'd my eyes on you, and said she 's there.
Say, knew you not, for whom I felt the pain,
Tho' still my tongue deny'd the real name?
How oft myself I've feign'd with liquor bold,
Truths from my mind more freely to unfold.
Once, when thy vest was loosen'd, I espy'd
Thy naked bosom, and its charms descry'd;
Whiter than purest snow, or milk, or Jove,
When as a swan he gain'd thy mother's love.
Fir'd at the sight, all motionless I stand,
And drop the goblet from my nerveless hand.
If to Hermione you gave a kiss,
Swift from her lips I stole the precious bliss.
Now, hot with wine, I mutter loves of old,
Now, nodding, shew, what he should not behold.
To aid my cause with honey'd words in vain
I've Æthra tried and Clymene to gain.
Abrupt they leave me, saying that they fear,
And dare not stay my piteous tale to hear.

Give but, ye Gods, fair Helen for the prize,
And see how vanquish'd each, who Paris tries.
As Schœneus' daughter yielded up her charms,
Hippodamia bless'd a Trojan's arms;
As fierce Alcides did his foe subdue,
When Dejanira was the prize in view;
I too would thus my matchless prowess prove,
And shew a suitor worthy of thy love:
Yet but with pray'rs can I my love express,
Or if you'll give me leave, your feet caress.
Thou honor to thy brother's blest above,
Bride worthy Jove, but that thy sire was Jove;
Or bless'd with thee, I'll see my native plains,
Or exil'd fly the land, where Priam reigns.
In my scorch'd breast I own no feeble flame,
The fire of love consumes my sick'ning frame.
Did not I tell thee, that from hands divine,
The torch set fire No lying sister mine.
What fate decrees, fair Helen, don't despise,
So may the Gods propitious still arise!
Much I've to say, which that I may reveal,
At midnight hour to thy soft bed I'll steal;
Start not, my Helen, tremble not at this,
May married people never do amiss?
Nay, simple Helen, could a form like thine,
In virtue's cheerless path be meant to pine?
On these conditions you possess your face,
That frowns of anger never it disgrace.

Great Jove and Venus acted just the same,
'Tis hence that you, in Jove, a father name;
Descended thus, if there be aught in blood,
Why think thyself too modest and too good:
Chaste may you be, tho' when we get to Troy
I only wish your scruples to destroy:
Then wisely seize what marriage rites will give.
If golden Venus doth not me deceive,
Your husband, e'en by actions, gives consent,
He flies as if to aid my suit he meant.
No better time he finds fair Crete to see,
Sagacious to a miracle is he;
On taking leave he thus thine ear address'd;
Prithee be careful of our Trojan guest.
That charge you now neglect, by Jove, I swear,
Neglected Paris is not Helen's care.
Was this due tribute to thy form to pay,
Can such a husband know thy worth, I say?
Ah, no! if well he knew what he possess'd,
Sure he'd not trust his jewel to a guest;
But not my words alone thy heart persuade
So apt a time compels us to the deed.
Sure we shall shew more folly still than he,
If such a chance as this neglected be.
Himself a lover to his wife he leads,
'Tis right he suffer for his foolish deeds.
All night you press a widow'd bed alone,
Nor greater joys doth widow'd Paris own;

A common cause should join us; then, I'll say,
Ah, night far brighter than the height of day.
Then will I swear for ever to be thine,
Swear as thou bid'st, by any pow'rs divine;
And if kind fate allow we'll seek the plains,
Where, lov'd and honor'd, aged Priam reigns;
You need not blush at thought of following me;
For all the blame, I swear, to take from thee.
Like Theseus and thy brothers, mine the fault,
And can to thee than these be nearer aught.
Theseus stole thee, they the Leucippidæ
The last bold theft of love appears in me.
The Trojan fleet awaits with arms and men,
We've oars and wind to pass the deep again.
A mighty queen shall Dardan cities hail,
A heav'n-descended goddess some shall tell.
Where'er you point your steps, perfumes shall burn,
For thee shall slaughter'd victims dying mourn.
With costly gifts, the more to shew their joy,
My sire shall load thee and the sons of Troy.
Alas! I faintly shew what riches wait
Thy happy landing on the Trojan state:
Nor think confed'rate Greece will pour its swarms,
Or rise indignant at thy ravish'd charms.
Before thy day full many a dame has blest
Her lover's arms, nor war disturb's their rest:
Did not Aguilo steal Orithya fair?
And was the theft the cause of any war?

Did foul revenge take place where Æson reign'd,
When fair Medea left her native land?
Nay, your own Theseus did aught ill betide,
When far from Crete he led his artful bride?
In love more fear than danger still appears,
We blush, we've trembled, when we know no fears:
Yet think you hear the horrid din of war,
Paris can fight, his sword can make a scar.
Nor Asia yields to Greece in wealth or might,
Num'rous our horses, heroes for the fight:
Nor Atreus son will meet th' approaching foe
Bolder than I, or braver actions shew.
When but a boy my stolen sheep I found,
And laid the robbers senseless on the ground.
Ilioneus, Deiphobus in vain
With me contended on the Trojan plain;
With sword in hand I know to play my part,
And true to aim still flies my fatal dart.
Can Atreus son in feats like these compare?
Such early courage shew such talents rare?
He may, yet he no brother Hector knows,
Hector a match for a whole host of foes.
Thou know'st not yet how powerful is my sword,
Or the firm prowess of thy future lord.
In vain for thee the Doric bands unite,
They'll ne'er engage, or perish in the fight.
Quick my glad weapon from the scabbard flies,
I fear no foe, if Helen be the prize;

And you, what future glory waits your charms,
Whose matchless beauty sets the world in arms?
Come then, my Helen, leave the Spartan shores,
And all I've promis'd ask; for all is yours.

HELEN TO PARIS.

ARE these thy thanks for hospitable cheer?
This the return for all our pious care?
For this did Tenarus thy fleet receive
Safe from the violence of wind and wave?
From foreign nations tho' you plyed your oars,
Welcome you landed on the Spartan shores.
Can you this vile ingratitude then shew?
If such your conduct, are you friend or foe?
You laugh, I doubt not, at my just complaint,
And call me little ruſtic ignorant:
Laugh as you like,—so I live free from shame,
Nor vile dishonor stain my spotless name.
What tho' my face no angry features shews;
No frowns contemptuous turn my friends to foes;
Yet with good name I still have harmless play'd,
Adulterers no sport of me have made.
Which makes thy daring efforts more surprize,
To think from what thy hopes of me arise;
As Theseus stole me once by force of arms,
Worthy a second theft d'you think my charms?

Mine was the fault, if willingly I went,
But sure no crime attends a forced consent;
Yet e'en great Theseus did not gain his ends,
From aught but fear unhurt I met my friends;
Some harmless kisses only wanton stole,
But nothing further—they included all.
Yet ranker villainy thy thoughts employ,
To you in mischief Theseus was a boy:
Pure he restor'd me, and for the offence,
His modesty might plead—his penitence.
Was it for thee then, he repressed his flame?
And must I always be a public theme?
But I'm not vex'd; who can a lover scold?
If only all you tell, be truly told,
'Tis this I dread; not but I know my charms,
'Tis no mistrust of them my soul alarms:
Yet women oft credulity lament,
Men often promise things they never meant.
True, woman's frail, and wedded virtue's rare,
Yet some are chaste, and I their merits share.
Do you with such intreaties press me now,
Because my mother broke her marriage vow?
Deceit alone plung'd her in guilty joy,
While with the beauteous bird she dared to toy.
No such excuse for me; thy aims I know,
Thou'rt no dissembler, but an open foe.
With Jove she sinned, Jove took away the crime,
But where's Almighty Jove to palliate mine?

What tho' you boast your race and royal line,
My houſe no lustre can receive from thine.
Jove tho' I name not, 'midst my husband's sires,
Nor Pelops, nor yet Tyndareus me fires.
Fair Leda bore me to almighty Jove,
When as a ſwan, the god obtain'd her love.
Go now, your Trojan ancestry explore,
Priam, Laomedon, and all your store;
These I acknowledge great, but not like mine,
You're only fifth, I'm first from race divine.
Tho' great, I doubt not, is your country's powers,
Equal to yours, and quite as great is ours.
Of men and riches, if we yield the palm,
Yet ſtill your country, Grecians, barb'rous name;
Preſents so rich your kindred will me pay,
As might lead goddesses themselves astray.
Believe me, Paris, you're the richest gift
To me, if e'er of virtue I'm bereft;
My spotless name I never will resign,
Or thou, and not thy presents make me thine.
Your presents, true, some value with me have,
But then the reason is, becauſe you gave;
More pleasing far thy love, and that for me
You've toils encounter'd, and th' extended ſea.
The table spread, with ill-dissembling face,
Your idle tricks, insidious youth, I trace.
One while on me your ardent eyes are thrown,
Which I can ſcarce encounter with my own

One while you ſigh, the cup next me then drink,
And where my lips have press'd, 'tis ſweet to think.
Oft have your fingers told a secret flame,
Your meaning looks have miss'd not of their aim.
And oft I've fear'd and blush'd with deeper dye,
Lest your unguarded tricks my husband spy;
And then I've hemm'd, or murmur'd in my mind,
A daring fellow this! True words I find.
On the round table with my name above,
Drawn out in wine, I've seen you write, I love;
Then my belief with frowns I strove to hide,
But now have oft the same endearments tried.
Were I dispos'd to break the marriage rite,
Such wheedling arts as these would me delight;
To do you justice, you've both form and face,
The ladies well might yield to your embrace;
Better some guiltless fair should happier prove
Than I should perish by unlawful love.
By my example beauty learn to fly,
'Tis virtue to forego what charms the eye.
Think others wish for what you vent your sighs,
Yet rule desire. —— Has Paris only eyes?
Tho' you've more front, yet others can behold
And feel as much as you, tho' not so bold.
Oh! had your vessel reach'd the Spartan shore,
And anchor'd, e'er my virgin charms were o'er,
Of thousand suitors you'd have led the way,
My husband e'en will pardon what I say.

But now too late you seek my ravish'd charms,
Fate has decreed me to another's arms.
Nor does my husband's treatment me incite
To let a Trojan rob him of his right.
Cease with kind words then thus to wound my peace,
And as you say you love me, don't disgrace.
Where fate has fix'd me, let me still remain,
Nor wanton tempt me to eternal shame.
You say that Venus gave me to your arms,
When rival goddesses display'd their charms.
Whilst glory one, and pow'r the other gave,
She thus pronounc'd, you shall fair Helen have;
Scarce can I think their heav'nly charms to thee,
Celestials would unfold in rivalry.
If this be true, the rest I'm sure you feign,
Me the reward of judgment when you name.
No vanity like this my bosom warms,
To think a goddess gave me to thine arms.
Enough for me, that men my charms admire,
No praise from hateful Venus I desire.

A

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